IOWA URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

Community Trees

Winter 2006 *Volume 17, Issue 1*

The best time to plant a tree was twenty years ago. The second best time is now.

2006 Council Awards and Tree City USA Recognition Event Upcoming

The Council would like to announce that the *2006 Iowa Tree City USA Community Forestry Awards Luncheon* will be held on March 30 at the Airport Holiday Inn, located in Des Moines. A primary function of the luncheon is to recognize the recipients of the Council Awards, as well as the communities that have qualified for the various Tree City USA awards.

The Council Awards recognize individuals and groups that have made significant contributions to urban and community forestry, whether through improving the size and health of community forests, increasing education and awareness, promoting advocacy, etc. Your help is needed in 1) identifying deserving individuals or groups, and 2) submitting a nomination. Not only is the nominee recognized, but the review committee also appreciates having a sufficient pool of nominees to choose from. The members of the Council hope that you will send in a nomination using the enclosed form and help to recognize those whose efforts have been outstanding. Nominations are due by February 8, 2006.

TREE CITY USA

The National Arbor Day Foundation's "Tree City USA" award recognizes

continued on page 2

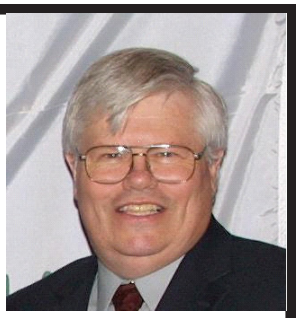
Smaller Trees Provide An Option for Planting Projects

The many benefits of trees have been well-documented and are cited often in conveying their value to people. In the winter, trees and woody shrubs are especially important to wildlife and birds. They provide protection and food during a time when neither is in good supply. Conifers can provide critical winter cover, greatly reduce wind chill temperatures (allowing wildlife to conserve their body heat), and offer safety from predators. Deciduous trees and shrubs, especially those with dense, low hanging branches, also provide shelter and winter food sources. Humans also benefit from the protective role that trees and shrubs play. One example of this is the familiar farmstead windbreak, which is usually dominated by conifers. They add color to the landscape, reduce energy usage and costs, and reduce the effects of wind-chill. Even with the multitude of benefits associated with trees, however, there are sometimes roadblocks to implementing a planting project.

continued on page 5

Inside

President's Message



In the Midwest, we have a tendency to start off conversations with a few comments about the weather. After all, our heritage is laced with a heavy dose of outdoor activities and the weather obviously has a great amount of influence in our lives. Each night, about 40% of the local news concerns the weather. And not just the local weather - national weather and international climatic disasters are fully discussed. So why should this article be any different?

This summer was very typical for Iowa. The weather has been anything but typical and yet it has been pretty much normal. Confused? Well, so are the weather forecasters. Let's see - we had some very hot temperatures, drought, wind, spotty rains, and hail, not exactly in that order. It was pretty much a typical Iowa summer. So what does this have to do with trees?

Well, tree survival and growth somewhat depend upon weather conditions. Trees require sunlight for photosynthesis. Plants need adequate rainfall to survive. Winds can cause a lot of damage. High temperatures and dry conditions can help in controlling some pest problems, such as insects, molds, and fungi.

Looking at the current winter season, tree survival and well-being can also be impacted by weather conditions. Some seeds depend upon certain moisture rates and a freeze-thaw cycle for stratification. That same freeze-thaw cycle helps the soil structure open up for aeration. Snow melt and winter rains help replenish the soil with moisture for new spring growth. Frigid temperatures can help in controlling some insect populations. Heavy snow or ice buildup on branches can be very damaging – and if strong winds are added, it can be a disastrous situation. Poorly-timed warm spells followed by deep freezes can result in freshly swollen buds being killed.

In addition to tree health, tree maintenance is also affected by the weather. Healthy trees need less maintenance then those under stress. Dry or frozen turf allows heavy trucks and equipment to enter and work in some areas that may otherwise be too soft for access. Rainy or windy conditions can dictate the type of work that can be performed. Heavy snow cover can limit access to only those trees near plowed roadways. In some cases, severe weather may dictate the type of work that is needed. There is no getting around it - the weather affects our lives and our livelihoods.

Keith Majors

Luncheon, continued from page 1

communities that have worked for the advancement of urban forestry and invested in the local tree resources. To become a *Tree City USA,* your community must 1) Possess either a city forester or an active city tree board, 2) Have a tree ordinance, 3) Annually spend at least $2 per capita for a community forestry program, and 4) The mayor must issue a proclamation naming a day as "Arbor Day".

Qualifying communities will be presented with the award and will have the opportunity to take a photo with a state leader, often the Governor. The hope is that the award will be a source of community pride. *Tree City USA* applications can be found on the DNR Forestry Bureau's website (www.iowadnr.com/forestry/treecity.html) and should be submitted as soon as possible. Completed applications should be returned to: Randy Cook, Forestry Bureau/ Iowa DNR, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034. Please contact Randy Cook (515-281-5600, Randy.Cook@dnr.state.ia.us) with any questions.

The End of an Era

By Jeff Iles, ISU Horticulture

When someone is *really* good at what they do, and they've been good throughout their entire career, it's easy to take their accomplishments and contributions for granted. Perhaps unfairly, we come to expect extraordinary quality in everything they do. For some, the pressure of having to meet lofty expectations in each and every activity might become a crushing burden. But for **Dr. Paul Wray**, Department of Natural Resource Ecology & Management, Iowa State University, it's just a way of life. For 30 years Paul has been the consummate educational professional. Whether addressing a group of grizzled DNR District Foresters out in the timber somewhere, explaining the basics of tree pruning to Community Tree Stewards in Cherokee, or simply offering guidance and support to a colleague on some "two-lane" in Washington County at 1:00 a.m., Paul is always the trusted and respected teacher and friend. But after 30 years, Paul has decided to come in from the road, step down from his faculty position at Iowa State, and experience another side of life. I refuse to call his move a "retirement" because Paul just isn't the retiring type. So, while it's true he'll be giving up his king-sized office and "cushy" job as a faculty member, don't expect him to be trading in his pruning shears for a shuffleboard pole just yet. Between fishing, gardening, and cultivating his Christmas tree business, I'm sure Paul will find plenty of things to do with his time.

But just who exactly is this Paul Wray fellow? Well you probably knew he was a native Iowan, but did you know he graduated from Davis County Community High School in Bloomfield? You should check out his high school senior picture sometime. Shocking! You also probably knew Paul is a loyal Cyclone, but did you know he received all of his advanced degrees from Iowa State? And have you ever wondered how Paul maintains such an even keel? I mean, he never seems to have a bad day. Maybe a tour in Viet Nam back in the 1960's coupled with 30 years on the job working with characters like Walkowiak, Vitosh, and Feeley have a way of keeping things in their proper perspective. Who knows? But whatever the reason, it was always great fun working with Paul and his departure leaves a mighty big hole at Iowa State and in community forestry education in Iowa.

So, when you see Paul this winter, perhaps at the Shade Tree Short Course, stop him, grab that big paw of his, and let him know how important his contributions were. Thank him for the way he made learning fun. Thank him for the thousands of seeds sown, trees planted, and students trained and the overall positive effect those acts had on the state of Iowa. Or maybe, just offer up a simple "thanks." I think he might like that best.

Thanks Paul!

Iowa Arborist Association Serves Members and Citizens

By Brian Jay, Iowa Arborist Association President

The Iowa Arborist Association (IAA) is open to all people interested in arboriculture and urban forestry, and the membership represents a variety of professions, including the academic community, tree care companies, and municipal employees. Anyone interested in getting more information and training on tree planting and care as well as a chance to network with other professionals and people interested in arboriculture is welcome to become a member.

The mission of the Iowa Arborist Association is to increase the level of appreciation of trees, increase interest in planting and caring for shade and ornamental trees, promote the science and practice of professional arboriculture, and encourage education of the public.

The IAA generally offers 2-4 training workshops each year, and continuing education credits are generally available for Certified Arborists (International Society of Arboriculture). Past workshops have covered a variety of topics, including

continued on page 7

Forest Health Update

Emerald Ash Borer: Preparing for a Potential Problem

By Aron Flickinger, Iowa DNR Forest Health Coordinator

Editor's Note: The emerald ash borer has developed into a major pest and currently threatens ash trees in the eastern Midwest. Though it has not been found in Iowa yet, its possible future arrival could have a significant impact since ash accounts for a large percentage of our community trees. This article is meant to provide background information, an update on the status of the borer, and an explanation of the government's response activities.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forestry Bureau in cooperation with Iowa State University Extension has been using protocols developed by the USDA Forest Service to monitor Iowa for signs of the emerald ash borer (EAB). This exotic insect has killed over 15 million ash trees in Michigan, Indiana and Ohio since 2002. A surveillance system has been in place for the past two years in Iowa to detect the presence of this insect on ash trees. This year's activity included visual surveys of ash trees in towns located in all 99 counties, visual inspection of ash sawlogs at 43 sawmills and inspection of 49 "trap" trees.

The DNR is very concerned about EAB becoming established in Iowa because ash is such a common tree in the urban landscape and it is widely used in forest tree plantings. Since all ash trees are susceptible to EAB infestation, this has the potential to cause major economic and ecological damage in our state. Early detection and immediate eradication of EAB introductions are the best ways to prevent this damage.

There are three ways the emerald ash borer could become established in Iowa. One is movement of nursery stock. This method of infection is preventable due to the implementation by the Iowa Nursery and Landscape Association (INLA) of a voluntary moratorium on purchasing ash trees from east of the Mississippi River. A second method is movement of sawlogs to Iowa from out of state. Given the cost of hauling logs from the areas infested with EAB, it is not economically feasible for sawmills in Iowa to purchase logs from MI, OH or IN. If EAB becomes established in one of our neighboring states, then this method of infection becomes more probable. The third method is transportation of firewood. If a person from an area with EAB was to bring infested firewood (larvae or pupae under the bark) and not burn all of the firewood immediately, it would be possible for the insect to spread into living ash hosts here. As a preventive measure, trap trees were placed within one-half mile of campgrounds thought to be most likely to be visited by out-of-state campers.

This bumper sticker was developed by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and is being used as a public awareness tool in EAB-affected areas. Courtesy of US Forest Service.

Trap trees are created in one of two ways. One method is to girdle and leave standing ash trees that are up to 13" in diameter. If the EAB is present in an area with trap trees, it will be more successful in attacking one of these stressed trees than a healthy one. One problem with this method is that standing trees are killed and can no longer be used to attract the insect the following year. Many campgrounds do not have ash trees that are easily accessible, or they are not willing to have them killed mechanically for such a project.

The second method of creating a trap tree involves using potted nursery stock that is greater than 1.5" in diameter. In 2005, Miller Nursery in Johnston donated 25 ash trees that would normally sell for $200 each. These trees were not in saleable condition at the time but were still alive. We were able to plant these trees around campgrounds that did not have ash trees or did not want ash trees girdled. The trees purposefully were not planted properly and were not watered. We wanted them to be stressed and attract insects from the area.

continued on page 5

Forest Health Update, continued from page 4

Results show that the EAB was not detected in any visual survey or trap tree survey. Other borers and bark beetles did attack the girdled and potted ash trees, however. This gives researchers some confidence that the insects are finding the ash trees, regardless of the method used. Using potted trees provides the advantage of placing the trees in open areas that are in close proximity to campgrounds. They take much less time to inspect for insects than do larger, standing trees, allowing for more sites to be evaluated.

Larval feeding gallery with D-shaped holes where the adult emerges. The gallery destroys the tree's conductive tissue, or cambium, causing mortality. Photo by Toby Petrice, USDA Forest Service, courtesy of www.forestryimages.org/ .

In Iowa, efforts are currently under way to 1) Add county campgrounds to the list of locations to have trap trees, 2) Work with the INLA to obtain 50-100 donated ash trees that are at least 1.5" in caliper size for the 2006 EAB survey, 3) Provide information about the EAB monitoring program to groups such as County Conservation Boards, INLA, Iowa Arborist Association, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the DNR State Parks Bureau, 4) Obtain a list of zip codes of the quarantined areas to provide to campground staff in order to cross-reference campers when they are checking in, 5) Design and print a wallet-sized EAB card for handing out at meetings, 6) Use existing data and community contacts (such as through the *Tree City USA* program) to locate the towns that have the greatest percentage and number of ash trees, and 7) Coordinate with retail outlets regarding their source of firewood and inform them about EAB.

In order to prepare for the 2006 season, the DNR is asking for help in obtaining donated ash nursery stock. The trees must be alive, but poorly formed, stressed, frost cracked, or other trees that are not in saleable condition would work for this project. However, the trees do need to be able to be moved manually. If you are willing to donate nursery stock, please contact Aron Flickinger at (515) 233-8067. For more information on the most current status of the EAB, log onto www.emeraldashborer.info .

The longer we can keep Iowa free of the emerald ash borer, the longer ash trees will remain a viable tree in the landscape. A solid system of public awareness, education and monitoring is essential to this process.

Small-sized Trees, continued from page 1

One hurdle can be funding, particularly with large tracts of land, small acreages, and even larger backyard spaces. Installing landscape-sized trees, such as those found at most retail nurseries, is an excellent option for projects that call for one to several dozen trees (depending on the plan and budget). However, for many landowners or in other situations where the desired project outpaces the available budget, alternative plans may have to be made. One option to avoid doing only a portion of the project or spreading it over several years is to use smaller-sized plant material.

Seedlings are trees that are grown from seed and have not yet attained a height of 3 feet (courtesy of US Forest Service website www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/silvics_manual/volume_2/glossary/glossary.htm). When compared to landscape-sized trees, seedlings are certainly smaller, but have a lesser degree of transplant shock and often gain a lot of ground in the first few years after planting. They are more easily damaged by wildlife, but this can be compensated for by decreasing the space between trees, since the trees can be purchased at a dramatically lower price per plant than landscape-sized trees. As with any project, it is smart to consider all of the factors that come into play, but seedlings may be a good option for many projects.

The State Forest Nursery in Ames offers over forty different species of native tree and shrub seedlings (bareroot, 8-24" tall). Visit the State Forest Nursery at www.iowadnr.com/forestry/nursery.html or call 800-865-2477 for more information.

Community Profile

Newton

By Denny Slings, Park & Recreation Director

The Newton Park Commission has served as the lead organization regarding urban forestry efforts throughout the Newton community. Over 20 years ago, the Commission embarked on a program designed to stabilize and enhance the tree population throughout the Park System. Prior to that time, forestry enhancement had not been a priority and the result was a tree inventory which contained an inordinate number of trees in the later stages of their useful life.

Efforts to 1) inventory all park area trees, 2) place the trees in various categories, 3) schedule removals and replacements with an emphasis on species diversity, 4) establish in-house tree nurseries which provide quality tree replacements at a fraction of the cost of commercially grown trees, and 5) follow up with proper forestry maintenance techniques, have resulted in a diverse, healthy, vibrant and interesting tree population, and one that adds a great deal of interest and value to our public grounds and recreational areas. Stabilizing a tree population does not happen overnight, however. It requires a long-term commitment, but also provides long-term benefits.

One noticeable side benefit of this public program has been the increased interest in forestry issues throughout the Newton community on both public and private properties. The Newton Community School District, Des Moines Area Community College-Newton Campus, Jasper County and others in the public realm have demonstrated an increased interest in maintaining and promoting trees and their care on their respective properties. Private concerns, including corporations and businesses, along with individual property owners, have also increased efforts to promote and maintain healthy trees for today and the future.

A major partner in the Newton Park Commission program has been Project A.W.A.K.E., which is a Community Beautification Organization committed to improving the overall appearance of the Newton Community. Project A.W.A.K.E. has been instrumental in securing funding for major tree planting projects throughout the city, organizing volunteer projects related to landscaping and beautification, and providing funds and methods that are necessary to carrying out proper maintenance in those areas. In cooperation with the Newton Park Commission, the Newton Arboretum and Botanical Garden has been developed and showcases literally thousands of different trees and plants that contribute to the beautification and enhancement of the Iowa landscape. The Arboretum has and will continue to serve as an inspiration to those committed to providing a healthy and diverse tree population for future generations to enjoy.

Involvement with Tree City USA, the National Arbor Day Foundation, Iowa Department of Natural Resources Forestry Bureau, Arbor Day activities and other promotions helps draw attention to forestry issues and exposes our citizens to available resources designed to aid them in the planting and care of the next generation of trees that will grace the community of Newton.

In a Nutshell

ISU NREM Welcomes New Chair

Dr. David Engle became the new chair of Iowa State University's Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management in August. He comes to ISU after 22 years on the faculty of Oklahoma State University, where he was Regents Professor of Rangeland Ecology and Management. Engle joined Oklahoma State in 1983 as an associate professor in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences. He earned a doctorate in range science in 1978 from Colorado State University.

Iowa Arborist Association, continued from page 3

chain saw safety, advanced climbing, oak health, insect and disease problems, and hazard tree analysis. Field tours are sometimes offered as well, such as a recent trip to the Vermeer Plant in Pella.

The IAA also supports Iowa State University's outstanding Annual Shade Tree Short Course, which will take place March 14-15, 2006 in Ames. The IAA holds its annual meeting during the Shade Tree Short Course, and welcomes interested persons. For those wanting to become members or renew membership, the organization will have a table set up at the Shade Tree Short Course or visit www.forestry.iastate.edu/IAA/IAA.html.

If you're not currently a member of the Iowa Arborist Association, we hope you'll consider getting involved in a workshop or other activity, and possibly even become a member!

NOTE: *This newsletter can be found online at either of two websites: www.forestry.iastate.edu/iucfc/ OR www.iowadnr.com/forestry/.*

Calendar of Events

January 10
Council Meeting
Ames
randy.cook@dnr.state.ia.us

February 21-23
Midwest ISA Annual Conference
Bismarck, ND
jr4stree@charter.net

March 11
Forest Stewardship Conference (NE Iowa)
Sinsinawa, WI
www.forestry.iastate.edu/ext/fep.html

March 14-15
50th Annual Shade Tree Short Course
Ames
iles@iastate.edu

March 30
IUCFC Awards Luncheon
Des Moines
randy.cook@dnr.state.ia.us

April 22
Earth Day

April 28
Arbor Day

April is Arbor Month in Iowa!

Iowa Urban and Community Forestry Council members:

John Batt, Council Bluffs
Mike Bevins, IADALS
Mike Brandrup, IADNR
Don Brazelton, Iowa Assn CCB
Matt Brewer, IADNR
Lisa Burban, USDA Forest Service
Jeremy Cochran, IADNR
Ralph Conner, Wright Tree Care
Randy Cook, IADNR
Mark Dungan, Polk CCB
Tivon Feeley, ISU Forestry Extension
Aron Flickinger, IADNR
Laura Hawks, ASLA
Jeff Iles, ISU Horticulture
Daniel Kalbach, Oskaloosa

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Keith Majors, Davenport
Jim Mason, Country Landscapes
Mark Masteller, IADOT
Patty Peterson, Trees Forever
Shannon Ramsay, Trees Forever
Merry Rankin, IADNR
Terry Robinson, Iowa City
Tricia Rummer, IADNR
Deb Ryun, Conservation Districts
Rick Tagtow, NICC
Jan Thompson, ISU NREM
Mark Vitosh, IADNR
John Walkowiak, IADNR
Paul Wray, ISU Forestry Extension

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IOWA URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

Grant Announcement

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – Forestry Bureau will be providing approximately $25,000 of USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry funds to sponsor a matching grant for tree planting as well as tree maintenance and improvement projects in Iowa communities. The *Community Improvement through Healthy Trees* grant will award between $500 and $1,500 in matching funds to community organizations and governments for use in 1) purchasing and planting trees on publicly-owned property, and 2) conducting tree maintenance projects. Grant recipients will be required to document project expenditures equal to or exceeding the amount of the grant. The ranking criteria for selecting grant recipients will emphasize volunteer involvement, outreach efforts in low to moderate-income neighborhoods and communities, and projects taking place in parks, schools, and other high-use areas. Tree planting projects will be completed by June 30, 2006, and maintenance projects will be completed by September 1, 2006.

Applications can be downloaded from www.iowadnr.com/forestry/ and then "Community and Yard Trees". Applications are due by February 21, 2006. For more information or to request a paper copy of the application, please contact Matt Brewer, Forestry Volunteer Coordinator (515-242-6892, Matt.Brewer@dnr.state.ia.us).